

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: 20 September 2006

Division: Growth Management

Bulk Item: Yes X No

Department: Marine Resources

Staff Contact Person: George Garrett

AGENDA ITEM WORDING:

Approval of expenditure of up to \$10,000 from Boating Improvement Funds (BIF) to the City of Key West for buoy maintenance at the Key West Marine Park.

ITEM BACKGROUND:

The City of Key West recently took over the Key West Marine Park from Reef Relief. The City is requesting funds from BIF be allocated towards maintenance of the buoys and associated signage for the first year. The City will assume all maintenance costs thereafter. The County Marine and Port Advisory Committee unanimously agreed to this expenditure at its August 2, 2006 meeting.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOCC ACTION:

N/A

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES:

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Approval

TOTAL COST: up to \$10,000 **BUDGETED:** Yes X No

COST TO COUNTY 0 **SOURCE OF FUNDS:** BIF 62520

REVENUE PRODUCING: Yes No X **AMOUNT PER MONTH** **Year**

APPROVED BY: County Atty. *CV 8-21-06*
OMB/Purchasing X Risk Management

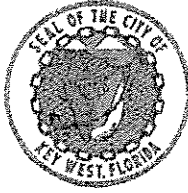
DIVISION DIRECTOR APPROVAL:

T/S 8/18/2-6
M. Lee

DOCUMENTATION: Included X Not Required

DISPOSITION:

AGENDA ITEM #



THE CITY OF KEY WEST

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www.keywestcity.com

TO: *Rich* Richard Jones, Monroe County Marine Resources Division
FROM: Raymond Archer, Port Director *Raymond Archer*
DATE: August 14, 2006

RE: Request for Boating Improvement Funds for Key West Marine Park

Executive Summary:

The City of Key West requests that up to \$10,000 in Monroe County Boating Improvement Funds be allocated for maintenance of the Key West Marine Park this year. The park provides a safe area for swimmers that are separated from the many boaters, personal watercraft, sailboats and charterboats that also use this busy shoreline. Educational signage and brochures educate park visitors about the zoned management system and the marine environment of these biologically diverse nearshore waters.

The funds will be used for the city to assume the expenses of maintaining the park and 34 demarcation buoys. This year, the park's maintenance is being turned over to the City of Key West by Reef Relief, a nonprofit organization that agreed to start-up and maintain the park for the first five years. The five years expires in September, 2006.

The demarcation buoys identify three no-motor swimming areas and two vessel access lanes established within the park by city ordinance. Public access is available to the park waters from South Beach, Higgs Beach, and Dog Beach next to Louie's Backyard. There are also eleven upland property owners that comprise private resorts, a restaurant, a time-share condominium, piers and private residents. All of the upland property owners supported the creation of the park that began in 2000. Funds are available in the Boating Improvement Fund for Monroe County and both the Key West Port Advisory Board and the Monroe County Marine and Port Advisory Committee have approved requests of support for such an allocation.

Project Description:

The oceanside shoreline of the island of Key West is home to abundant marinelife as part of the coral reef ecosystem. A growing number of residents and visitors utilize the area for swimming and snorkeling while others enjoy this same shoreline for boating and fishing.

The City of Key West joined forces with Reef Relief in 2000 to establish the Key West Marine Park to provide such a zoned management system for the oceanside area from Duval Street to the White Street Pier, which extend out 600 feet into nearshore waters within city jurisdictional limits.

The purpose of the park was to create a multiple-use zoned area on the oceanside of the island of Key West with areas that are accessible to swimmers only but not boats, and adjacent vessel access lanes for use by fishing, sailing, charter, dive and other motorized vessels. The goal was to enhance various uses of the shoreline while providing a safe recreational opportunity for visitors and residents to swim, boat, and learn more about and enjoy the coral reef environment.

The State of Florida Department of Community Affairs provided a grant to Reef Relief to establish the Key West Marine Park that was matched by the Casa Marina Resort. All of the other upland property owners submitted letters of support for the creation of the Key West Marine Park, including Monroe County, which approved creation of the Key West Marine Park for Higgs Beach, a county beach located within the upland boundaries of the park. The county also sponsored a sign on the Key West Marine Park that is installed at Higgs Beach.

The City of Key West approved an ordinance establishing three no-motor swimming lanes within the park boundaries and obtained State of Florida approval of a management plan for the state baybottom in this area that reflects creation of the Key West Marine Park.

The Marine Park has become a destination in itself for visitors as well as our citizens. Given the benefits to the marine environment, the access and experience to the park's users we believe this is a great example of what the Boating Improvement funding is meant for.

Thank you for your help with this effort and if there is anything else required for the grant process please contact me at rarcher@keywestcity.com.